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EXAMINER

TORIMIRO, ADETOKUNBO OLUSEGUN

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3714

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/829,393

Applicant(s)

ITOI ET AL.

Examiner

Adetokunbo O. Torimiro

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 September 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendment received on 09/06/2007 has been considered. It has been noted that claims 1-37 have been amended. New claims 38-44 have been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Itou (US 6,439,998) in view of Nakatani et al (US 5,720,663) and Komoto (US 6,273,814).

Re claim 1: Itou teaches a game apparatus displaying a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see **fig.9; col.1, lines 53-56**), comprising: one or more first storage locations for storing one or more parameters for each enemy appearing in said game world (see **col.6, lines 24-30**); one or more second storage locations for storing one or more operation timing patterns / *waiting time* indicative of player timings to be input in association with each enemy (see **col.6, lines 34-53**); input pattern changing programmed logic circuitry for displaying, when the battle scene is displayed, an input pattern and changing a displaying manner of said input pattern on the basis of one of one or more the operation timing patterns associated with the enemy character appearing in said battle scene stored in said second storage locations (see **col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11**); changing value calculating programmed logic circuitry for calculating a changing value for changing the parameter of the enemy depending

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upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting programmed logic circuitry and the timing of the operation timing pattern (see col.10, lines 44-51); and parameter updating programmed logic circuitry for updating the parameter / *executing time* of the enemy appearing in said battle scene on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating programmed logic circuitry (see abstract, lines 10-15).

However, Itou does not explicitly teach an operation detecting programmed logic circuitry for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said input pattern.

Nakatani et al teaches an operation detecting programmed logic circuitry for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said input pattern (see col.6, lines 19-35).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al so as to provide a means for detecting the player input in the game and hence to carry out the operation in response to the input of the player.

Re claim 2: Itou teaches the game apparatus, wherein said second storage locations store for each character the operation timing patterns having different difficulty levels of an operation for said player (see col.6, lines 34-53), and said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with any one of an offensive character and a defensive character (see col.5,

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lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). It is apparent to Examiner that the storage location is simply a storage, which stores any information regarding the game and characters regardless of difficulty level as long as there is an instruction to do so.

Re claims 3,7, and 39: Itou teaches the game apparatus displaying a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see **fig.9; col.1, lines 53-56**).

However, Itou fails to teach a game apparatus, wherein the parameter includes a physical strength parameter on which a battle continuing ability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism reduces the physical strength parameter of a defensive character such that the defensive character appearing in said battle scene is damaged on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism; wherein the parameter includes an ability parameter on which a superiority of a fighting capability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism updates the ability parameter of the character to be operated by said player on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism when the battle is ended.

Nakatani et al teaches a game apparatus, wherein the parameter includes a physical strength parameter on which a battle continuing ability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism reduces the physical strength parameter of a defensive character such that the defensive character appearing in said battle scene is damaged on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism; wherein the parameter includes an ability parameter on which a superiority of a fighting capability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism updates the ability parameter of the character

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to be operated by said player on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism when the battle is ended (see fig.13B; col.9, lines 42-58).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al since the strength and skill of a game character is one of the characters attribute/parameter and also since it is only obvious to adjust and reduce the defensive character's strength as a result of damages received from the opposing character thereby making the game more realistic and hence increasing the player's enjoyment of the game.

Re claims 4 and 5: Itou teaches the game apparatus, wherein said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner by displaying said instruction image in one of a rhythmic manner, an enlarged/reduced manner, and a displayed/non-displayed manner on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with the character appearing in said battle scene; wherein said instruction image changing mechanism changes at least one of a color and a shape of said instruction image at the timing that has to be operated by said player on the basis of the operation timing pattern (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to the Examiner that the present graphic processor makes it possible for any variety of display to be processed and displayed based on whatever is programmed and instructed into the game and hence battle scene.**

Re claim 6: Itou teaches the game apparatus, further comprising a music reproducing mechanism / *output unit* (6) for reproducing music data for playing a BGM in said battle scene

(see fig.1; col.6, lines 1-5), wherein said second storage locations store the music data which is utilized as the operation timing pattern and is constituted of a plurality of kinds of parts each being a reproduction object by said music reproducing mechanism (see col.6, lines 24-30), and said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of any one of the parts constituting the music data when said BGM is being played by said music reproducing mechanism (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to the Examiner that the present graphic processor makes it possible for any variety of display to be processed and displayed based on whatever is programmed and instructed into the game and hence battle scene.**

Re claims 8 and 10: Itou teaches the game apparatus, wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to significantly change the parameter of the character as a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern corresponding to said timing is higher; wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to be gradually increased when the degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern is successively high (see col.10, lines 44-51).

Re claim 9: Itou teaches the game apparatus, wherein said operation timing pattern is constructed so as to be successively operated at a plurality of timing patterns by said player (see

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col.6, lines 49-53), and said changing value calculating mechanism calculates, every time that the operation by said player is detected by said operation detecting mechanism, the changing value depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing by said player at that time and the timing of the operation timing pattern corresponding to said time (**see col.10, lines 44-51**).

Re claim 11: Itou teaches the game apparatus, further comprising turn changing programmed logic circuitry for allowing successive operations by said player while the degree of coincidence is not lower than a predetermined value and making a change between an offensive turn and a defensive turn at a time that the degree of coincidence becomes lower than the predetermined value, wherein said battle scene is for fighting the characters with each other by alternately repeating said offensive turn and said defensive turn (**see fig.3; col. 2, lines 30-45 and col.6, lines 58-67**).

Re claim 12: Itou teaches the game apparatus, further comprising third storage locations for storing the number of operable times / *waiting time* information indicative of the number of operable times by said player (**see col.6, lines 34-41**); a number of times reducing mechanism for reducing the number of operable times depending upon an operation of said player; and an operation ending mechanism for ending the operation by said player when the number of operable times becomes 0 (**see figs. 10A-10D; col.12, lines 1-7**).

Re claim 13: Itou teaches the game apparatus, further comprising a number of times

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increasing mechanism for increasing the number of operable times when the degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player and the timing of the operation timing pattern is successively higher (see col.10, lines 44-51).

Re claim 14: Itou teaches a memory medium encoded with a game program for execution by a computer of a game apparatus in order to display a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see figs.1 and 9; col.1, lines 53-56), comprising: first storage locations for storing a parameter for each character appearing in said game world (see col.6, lines 24-30); second storage locations for storing an operation timing pattern / *waiting time* indicative of player timings to be operated in association with each character (see col.6, lines 34-53); an instruction image changing mechanism for displaying, when the battle scene is displayed, an instruction image and changing a displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with the character appearing in said battle scene stored in said second storage locations (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11); a changing value calculating mechanism for calculating a changing value for changing the parameter of the character depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern (see col.10, lines 44-51); and a parameter updating mechanism for updating the parameter / *executing time* of the character appearing in said battle scene on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism (see abstract, lines 10-15).

However, Itou does not explicitly teach an operation detecting mechanism for detecting

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an operation by said player input in response to a change of said instruction image.

Nakatani et al teaches an operation detecting mechanism for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said instruction image (see col.6, lines 19-35).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al so as to provide a means for detecting the player input in the game and hence to carry out the operation in response to the input of the player.

Re claim 15: Itou teaches the memory medium with a game program wherein said computer functions such that said second storage locations store for each character the operation timing patterns having different difficulty levels of an operation for said player (see col.6, lines 34-53), and said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with any one of an offensive character and a defensive character (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to Examiner that the storage location is simply a storage, which stores any information regarding the game and characters regardless of difficulty level as long as there is an instruction to do so.**

Re claims 16 and 20: Itou teaches the memory medium encoded with a game program for execution and displaying a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see fig.9; col.1, lines 53-56).

However, Itou fails to teach a game apparatus, wherein the parameter includes a physical

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strength parameter on which a battle continuing ability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism reduces the physical strength parameter of a defensive character such that the defensive character appearing in said battle scene is damaged on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism; wherein the parameter includes an ability parameter on which a superiority of a fighting capability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism updates the ability parameter of the character to be operated by said player on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism when the battle is ended.

Nakatani et al teaches a game apparatus, wherein the parameter includes a physical strength parameter on which a battle continuing ability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism reduces the physical strength parameter of a defensive character such that the defensive character appearing in said battle scene is damaged on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism; wherein the parameter includes an ability parameter on which a superiority of a fighting capability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism updates the ability parameter of the character to be operated by said player on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism when the battle is ended (see **fig.13B; col.9, lines 42-58**).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al since the strength and skill of a game character is one of the characters attribute/parameter and also since it is only obvious to adjust and reduce the defensive character's strength as a result of damages received from the opposing character thereby making the game more

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realistic and hence increasing the player's enjoyment of the game.

Re claims 17 and 18: Itou teaches the memory medium encoded with a game program, wherein said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner by displaying said instruction image in one of a rhythmic manner, an enlarged/reduced manner, and a displayed/non-displayed manner on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with the character appearing in said battle scene; wherein said instruction image changing mechanism changes at least one of a color and a shape of said instruction image at the timing that has to be operated by said player on the basis of the operation timing pattern (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to the Examiner that the present graphic processor makes it possible for any variety of display to be processed and displayed based on whatever is programmed and instructed into the game and hence battle scene.**

Re claim 19: Itou teaches the memory medium encoded with a game program wherein gaming apparatus, further comprising a music reproducing mechanism / *output unit* (6) for reproducing music data for playing a BGM in said battle scene (see fig.1; col.6, lines 1-5), wherein said second storage locations store the music data which is utilized as the operation timing pattern and is constituted of a plurality of kinds of parts each being a reproduction object by said music reproducing mechanism (see col.6, lines 24-30), and said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of any one of the parts constituting the music data when said BGM is being played by said music reproducing mechanism (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to the Examiner that the present graphic processor makes it possible for any variety of display to**

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be processed and displayed based on whatever is programmed and instructed into the game and hence battle scene.

Re claims 21 and 23: Itou teaches the memory medium encoded with a game program, wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to significantly change the parameter of the character as a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern corresponding to said timing is higher; wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to be gradually increased when the degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern is successively high (see col.10, lines 44-51).

Re claim 22: Itou teaches the memory medium encoded with a game program, wherein said operation timing pattern is constructed so as to be successively operated at a plurality of timing patterns by said player (see col.6, lines 49-53), and said changing value calculating mechanism calculates, every time that the operation by said player is detected by said operation detecting mechanism, the changing value depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing by said player at that time and the timing of the operation timing pattern corresponding to said time (see col.10, lines 44-51).

Re claim 24: Itou teaches the memory medium encoded with a game program further

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comprising turn changing programmed logic circuitry for allowing successive operations by said player while the degree of coincidence is not lower than a predetermined value and making a change between an offensive turn and a defensive turn at a time that the degree of coincidence becomes lower than the predetermined value, and wherein said battle scene is for fighting the characters with each other by alternately repeating an offensive turn and a defensive turn (see **fig.3; col. 2, lines 30-45 and col.6, lines 58-67**).

Re claim 25: Itou teaches a game method of a game apparatus which displays a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see **figs.1 and 9; col.1, lines 53-56**), comprising: first storage locations for storing a parameter for each character appearing in said game world (see **col.6, lines 24-30**); second storage locations for storing an operation timing pattern / *waiting time* indicative of player timings to be operated in association with each character (see **col.6, lines 34-53**); an instruction image changing mechanism for displaying, when the battle scene is displayed, an instruction image and changing a displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with the character appearing in said battle scene stored in said second storage locations (see **col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11**); a changing value calculating mechanism for calculating a changing value for changing the parameter of the character depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern (see **col.10, lines 44-51**); and a parameter updating mechanism for updating the parameter / *executing time* of the character appearing in said battle scene on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing

value calculating mechanism (see abstract, lines 10-15).

However, Itou does not explicitly teach an operation detecting mechanism for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said instruction image.

Nakatani et al teaches an operation detecting mechanism for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said instruction image (see col.6, lines 19-35).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al so as to provide a means for detecting the player input in the game and hence to carry out the operation in response to the input of the player.

Re claim 26: Itou teaches the game method wherein said computer functions such that said second storage locations store for each character the operation timing patterns having different difficulty levels of an operation for said player (see col.6, lines 34-53), and said steps changes the displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with any one of an offensive character and a defensive character (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). It is apparent to Examiner that the storage location is simply a storage, which stores any information regarding the game and characters regardless of difficulty level as long as there is an instruction to do so.

Re claims 27 and 31: Itou teaches the game method for executing and displaying a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see fig.9; col.1, lines 53-56).

However, Itou fails to teach a gaming method, wherein the parameter includes a physical

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strength parameter on which a battle continuing ability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism reduces the physical strength parameter of a defensive character such that the defensive character appearing in said battle scene is damaged on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism; wherein the parameter includes an ability parameter on which a superiority of a fighting capability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism updates the ability parameter of the character to be operated by said player on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism when the battle is ended.

Nakatani et al teaches a gaming method, wherein the parameter includes a physical strength parameter on which a battle continuing ability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism reduces the physical strength parameter of a defensive character such that the defensive character appearing in said battle scene is damaged on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism; wherein the parameter includes an ability parameter on which a superiority of a fighting capability of the character depends, and said parameter updating mechanism updates the ability parameter of the character to be operated by said player on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism when the battle is ended (see **fig.13B; col.9, lines 42-58**).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al since the strength and skill of a game character is one of the characters attribute/parameter and also since it is only obvious to adjust and reduce the defensive character's strength as a result of damages received from the opposing character thereby making the game more

realistic and hence increasing the player's enjoyment of the game.

Re claims 28 and 29: Itou teaches the gaming method, wherein said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner by displaying said instruction image in one of a rhythmic manner, an enlarged/reduced manner, and a displayed/non-displayed manner on the basis of the operation timing pattern associated with the character appearing in said battle scene; wherein said instruction image changing mechanism changes at least one of a color and a shape of said instruction image at the timing that has to be operated by said player on the basis of the operation timing pattern (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to the Examiner that the present graphic processor makes it possible for any variety of display to be processed and displayed based on whatever is programmed and instructed into the game and hence battle scene.**

Re claim 30: Itou teaches the gaming method of gaming apparatus, further comprising a music reproducing mechanism / *output unit* (6) for reproducing music data for playing a BGM in said battle scene (see fig.1; col.6, lines 1-5), wherein said second storage locations store the music data which is utilized as the operation timing pattern and is constituted of a plurality of kinds of parts each being a reproduction object by said music reproducing mechanism (see col.6, lines 24-30), and said instruction image changing mechanism changes the displaying manner of said instruction image on the basis of any one of the parts constituting the music data when said BGM is being played by said music reproducing mechanism (see col.5, lines 57-62 and col.6, lines 6-11). **It is apparent to the Examiner that the present graphic processor makes it possible for any variety of display to be processed and displayed based on whatever is**

programmed and instructed into the game and hence battle scene.

Re claims 32 and 34: Itou teaches the gaming method, wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to significantly change the parameter of the character as a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern corresponding to said timing is higher; wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to be gradually increased when the degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern is successively high (see col.10, lines 44-51).

Re claim 33: Itou teaches the gaming method, wherein said operation timing pattern is constructed so as to be successively operated at a plurality of timing patterns by said player (see col.6, lines 49-53), and said changing value calculating mechanism calculates, every time that the operation by said player is detected by said operation detecting mechanism, the changing value depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing by said player at that time and the timing of the operation timing pattern corresponding to said time (see col.10, lines 44-51).

Re claim 35: Itou teaches the gaming method further comprising turn changing programmed logic circuitry for allowing successive operations by said player while the degree of

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coincidence is not lower than a predetermined value and making a change between an offensive turn and a defensive turn at a time that the degree of coincidence becomes lower than the predetermined value, wherein said battle scene is for fighting the characters with each other by alternately repeating an offensive turn and a defensive turn (see **fig.3; col. 2, lines 30-45 and col.6, lines 58-67**).

Re claims 36 and 37: Itou teaches a game apparatus displaying a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see **figs.1 and 9; col.1, lines 53-56**), comprising: first storage locations for storing a parameter for each character appearing in said game world (see **col.6, lines 24-30**); second storage locations for storing in association with said each character background music that renders an operation timing pattern presenting to a player timing patterns to be operated in a rhythm pattern (see **col.6, lines 24-30**); a BGM reproducing mechanism for reproducing background music associated with the character appearing in said battle scene stored in said second storage locations (see **fig.1; col.6, lines 1-5**); a changing value calculating mechanism for calculating a changing value for changing the parameter of the character depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the operation timing pattern; wherein said changing value calculating mechanism calculates the changing value so as to be gradually increased when the degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player detected by said operation detecting mechanism and the timing of the rhythm pattern is successively high (see **col.10, lines 44-51**); and a parameter updating mechanism for updating the parameter / *executing time* of the character appearing in said battle

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scene on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating mechanism (see **abstract, lines 10-15**).

However, Itou does not explicitly teach an operation detecting mechanism for detecting an operation by said player input after the background music starts to be reproduced.

Nakatani et al teaches an operation detecting mechanism for detecting an operation by said player input after the background music starts to be reproduced (see **col.6, lines 19-35**).

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou and Nakatani et al so as to provide a means for detecting the player input in the game and hence to carry out the operation in response to the input of the player.

Re claims 38 and 40-44: Itou teaches a game apparatus displaying a battle scene in which characters in a game world fight with each other (see **fig.9; col.1, lines 53-56**), comprising: one or more first storage locations for storing one or more parameters for each enemy appearing in said game world (see **col.6, lines 24-30**); changing value calculating programmed logic circuitry for calculating a changing value for changing the parameter of the enemy depending upon a degree of coincidence between the operation timing of said player at a time of being detected by said operation detecting programmed logic circuitry and the timing of the operation timing pattern (see **col.10, lines 44-51**); and parameter updating programmed logic circuitry for updating the parameter / *executing time* of the enemy appearing in said battle scene on the basis of the changing value calculated by said changing value calculating programmed logic circuitry (see **abstract, lines 10-15**); at least one third storage location that stores a

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determining value decreasing programmed logic circuitry that decreases the determining value in accordance with the difference calculated by the changing value calculation programmed logic circuitry; and turn ending determining programmed logic circuitry that determines whether or not said determining value is equal to or less than a predetermined threshold value, wherein dependent on a determination that said determining value is not equal to or less than a threshold value, at least the operation detection programmed logic circuitry continues to determine a difference and calculate a changing value, the determining value, and the turn end determining programmed logic circuitry continues to make a determination by comparing the determining value to the predetermined threshold value (see col.8, line 63-col.9, line 38).

However, Itou does not explicitly teach an operation detecting programmed logic circuitry for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said input pattern; at least one second storage location that stores timing frame numbers indicative of a plurality of timings at which a player is to make operations, rhythm patterns corresponding to the timings, and music data including information of the rhythm patterns, in association with respective enemy characters; music reproduction programmed logic circuitry that reproduces the music data in a battle scene; a counter that starts to count a frame number in synchronization with a start of a reproduction of the music data produced by said music reproduction programmed circuitry.

Nakatani et al teaches an operation detecting programmed logic circuitry for detecting an operation by said player input in response to a change of said input pattern (see col.6, lines 19-35).

Komoto teaches at least one second storage location that stores timing frame numbers indicative of a plurality of timings at which a player is to make operations, rhythm patterns

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corresponding to the timings, and music data including information of the rhythm patterns, in association with respective enemy characters; music reproduction programmed logic circuitry that reproduces the music data in a battle scene; a counter that starts to count a frame number in synchronization with a start of a reproduction of the music data produced by said music reproduction programmed circuitry (see col.5, lines 34-37; col.6, lines

Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings and inventions of Itou, Nakatani et al, and Komoto. One would be motivated to do this so as to provide a means for detecting the player input in the game and hence to carry out the operation in response to the input of the player; and to provide an option of timing using rhythm and sounds from the background music.

Response to Arguments

4. The Applicants correction and explanation in regards to the claim objections and 35 USC 112 rejection is accepted therefore, that objection and rejection has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments and amendments filed 09/06/2007 have been fully considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

In response to applicant's argument that neither Itou nor Nakatani teach timing pattern for the enemy character, examiner points out to Itou teaches timing to control general fighting time in the referenced section, which means that as long as the player of the game fights against a computer controlled character /enemy character, the time controlled for the player is also changed for the enemy; also while the active or wait time varies for the player controlled

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character, it is also controlled to affect the enemy character thereby teaching the applicant's claim.

In response to applicant's argument that Nakatani does not teach anything about operation timing patterns based on enemy character, examiner points out that Itou teaches this limitation as shown in Fig.3 and col.6, lines 49 and 50. The operation timing / waiting time is for both enemy character and player character as explained above.

In response to the applicant's argument that none of the prior art teach instruction operations nor input patterns for the enemies being fought, examiner points out to applicant that Itou teaches change in input as seen in col.6, lines 58-63. Examiner points that from Itou, if player can not attack due to waiting time, then the input pattern as changed either since the input pattern changed from the active mode to the wait mode or changed from attack input to defense input.

In response to applicant's argument regarding claim 36 that none of the prior art teach an operation timing coinciding with a rhythm of background music. Examiner notes that Komoto teaches this limitation. Also besides the new prior art Komoto teaching this limitation, examiner points out that Fig.3, col.6, lines 34-41, and col.10, lines 44-51 of Itou discusses about col. 20d of table 20 which talks about "time measuring data" which examiner interprets to mean the table that covers all timing data in the game including the timing of rhythm of background music; thereby teaching this limitation by teaching the incrementing based on the data from table 20.

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Conclusion

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Adetokunbo O. Torimiro whose telephone number is (571) 270-1345. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8am - 4pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Pezzuto can be reached on (571) 272-6996. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

AT


ROBERT E. PEZZUTO
SUPERVISORY PRIMARY EXAMINER